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ABSTRACT

This guidebook gives student teachers an overview of the early field experiences at Millersville University, Pennsylvania. After a preface and a visual model of teacher education at Millersville University, the guidebook focuses on: policies and procedures for early field experiences; key points for future teachers regarding early field experiences; information about the role of the cooperating teacher in early field experiences; responsibilities of the cooperating teacher; writing final evaluations of the student teacher during early field experiences; responsibilities of the principal during early field experiences; responsibilities of the university supervisor during early field experiences; questions frequently asked by early field experience cooperating teachers; student teaching policies; alternate student teaching; certification testing; and advanced professional studies.. (SM)

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MILLERSVILLE UNIVERSITY

A GUIDE FOR EARLY FIELD EXPERIENCES

A pre-student teaching handbook for ALL Education Majors, including Undergraduate Students and Post-Baccalaureate Certification Students

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PREFACE

All early field experiences are developed in conjunction with a University course, and as such, expectations for the field experience are developed and evaluated by the instructor of the course. This handbook has been prepared by the Early Field Experiences Office to give students an overview of the field experience. Specific, individual questions about the field experience should be directed to the student's University Professor.

Students need teachers who are challenged by the intellectual demands of teaching in an age of knowledge explosion. These teachers must be caring, responsible professionals who can exercise leadership and serve as advocates for the learner. Teachers should be able to build and use knowledge, matching worthy goals, appropriate teaching methods, and learners' styles. These education professionals need to be informed, reflective practitioners.

The term "field experiences" has been defined in research literature as those opportunities given to prospective teachers to visit schools, observe students and teachers, and acquire and refine the complex skills involved in teaching. The importance of Early Field Experiences (EFE) has been widely accepted and implemented; indeed, the value of EFE's is undeniable, and many state departments of education have mandated time in schools prior to student teaching.

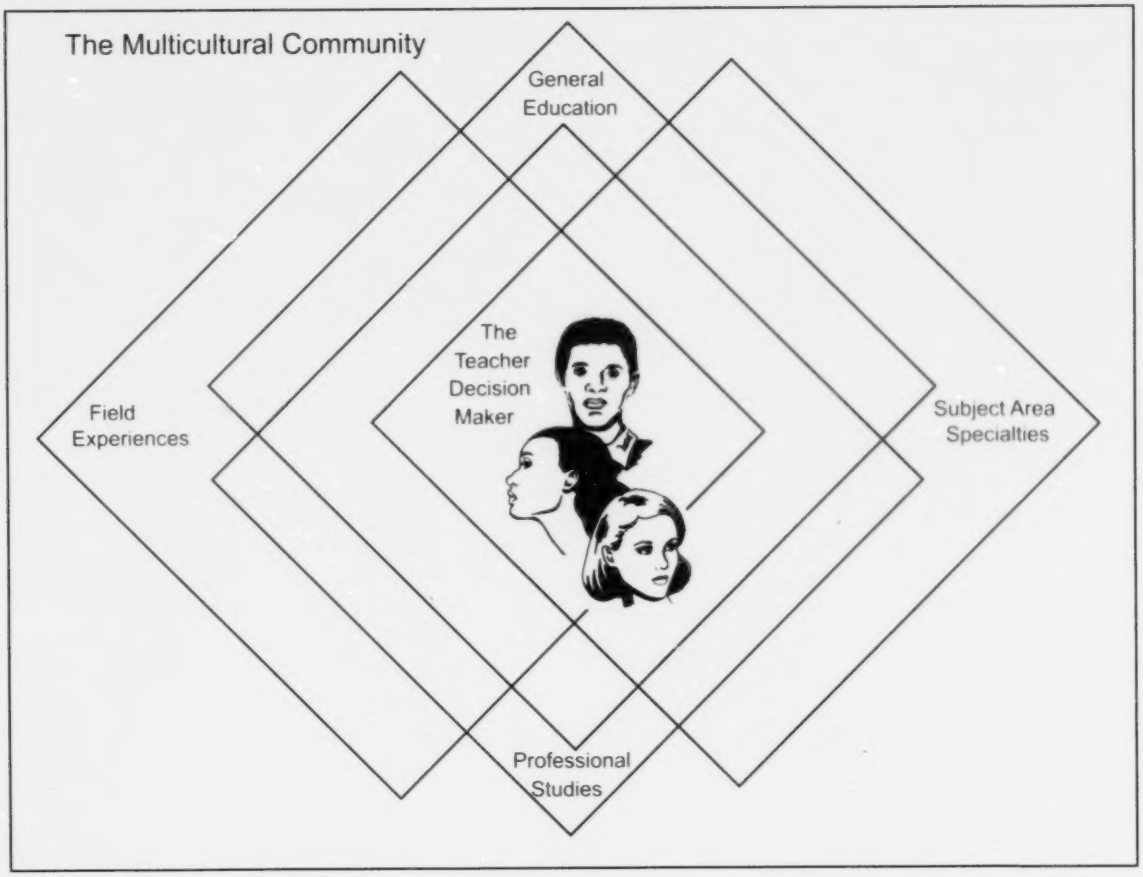
Lists of benefits most often include opportunities: to determine if the teacher-candidate likes children, to assess the teacher-candidate's ability to cope with classroom reality, and to develop and practice teaching skills. In addition, prospective teachers have an opportunity to observe many different students and their growth in a variety of settings. Future professionals also acquire a sense of good teaching, the purposes of teaching, and the realities of teaching as they begin to develop self-confidence. EFE's provide a safe environment in which to learn, and they are extraordinarily motivating to teacher-candidates.

The EFE portion of the teacher education program at Millersville University is designed to give students practical training in the classroom. Interaction with students, teachers, and staff members in actual schools is invaluable to your education at Millersville University. Proactive and reactive classroom management and real teaching experience cannot be acquired in any environment other than an actual classroom.

These experiences should reinforce your decision to become a teacher, as well as give you a chance to recognize your own strengths and weaknesses. If through these experiences you should question if teaching is the right career path for you, see your academic advisor.

For more information on Early Field Experiences, see website http://www.millersv.edu/~earlyfld

MODEL FOR TEACHER EDUCATION



This diagram is a visual representation of Millersville University's teacher preparation model. The "hub" is you, the student, in the process of becoming "the teacher/decision maker". Helping to shape your decision-making talents are the four components of your academic program: general education requirements, subject area specialties, core professional studies, and field experiences. All of this preparation occurs within a multi-cultural community context; therefore, you become exposed to the diverse strengths and needs of a variety of students.

A good teacher is a good decision maker.

POLICIES & PROCEDURES FOR EARLY FIELD EXPERIENCES

Student responsibilities for all field experiences include punctuality, ethical and professional behavior and actions, and confidentiality. It is suggested that students take the initiative in offering assistance in all classroom activities, requesting help or guidance from cooperating teachers, communicating progress or problems to University Supervisors, getting to know the children, and following school rules.

The student is a guest of the cooperating school. As a future member of the teaching profession, the student needs to maintain the same professional standards expected of the teaching employees of the cooperating school. The student is recognized as a representative of Millersville University by the students, faculty, and community to which he/she is assigned.

Students should begin to see the challenge of accepting the role of a practicing professional. The student is in the process of acquiring and refining the characteristics of this role.

One characteristic of a successful pre-service teacher is COMMITMENT. The student needs to be attentive to detail, punctuality, and preparedness. When involved with any teaching activity, **planning** is important. The student needs to know what the teaching task is and how it is to be completed.

The student **must** appreciate the classroom teacher's role as an advisor -- one who will help guide his/her efforts to improve and refine the role as a future professional.

Millersville University students **must** conduct themselves ethically and professionally at all times with administrators, teachers, and students.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

The student is urged to accept every task as a potential learning experience and to develop his/her own educational philosophy which will be consistent with the principles of a democratic society.

Students must report at the scheduled time every day. If for some reason a student must be absent, he/she should telephone the school office as far in advance as possible to notify the teacher.

The student is expected to be well-groomed and appropriately dressed as a member of the teaching profession. Students must abide by rules and regulations pertaining to the chewing of gum, wearing of hats, and other issues.

The student must adhere to confidentiality regulations. However, if a conversation involves statements pertaining to child abuse, sexual abuse, etc., the student should inform his/her cooperating teacher and University Supervisor as soon as possible. This conversation should not be discussed with friends or anyone other than those mentioned above.

A badge identifying the student must be worn when entering the school, and removed after leaving the school. The first badge is provided by the Early Field Experiences Office; if it is lost, a second badge can be purchased from the Early Field Experiences Office. Your name tag should be neatly printed with the title "Mr./Mrs./Ms./Miss" preceding your name.

The Millersville University student, in relating to the students he/she is teaching, should keep relationships on a professional basis, i.e., Ms. Jones or Mr. Smith, not Jen or Ken.

The student should work on developing good time-management skills. Being on time and having lessons, bulletin boards, or other assignments well-prepared will add to a positive experience and evaluation.

THE SUPERVISOR, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE COOPERATING TEACHER, HAS THE AUTHORITY TO CHANGE OR TERMINATE THE STUDENT'S ASSIGNMENT IF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT IS NOT MAINTAINED.

ATTENDANCE

At the first meeting with the cooperating teacher, times of arrival and departure should be discussed. Each student is expected to be in his/her assigned classroom on every day of the assignment. A student who is ill or has an emergency should call the cooperating teacher and University Supervisor. **DO NOT SEND WORD WITH ANOTHER STUDENT.**

If the student is absent for any reason, it is his/her responsibility to make sure the cooperating teacher has any teaching materials or manuals which the student may have borrowed.

Students should become familiar with the local radio and TV stations that announce the closing of schools for snow and/or other emergencies.

Students should be alert to special announcements regarding early dismissals, in-service days, or holiday closings. This can be checked with the school office personnel.

DISRUPTION OF SCHOOLS

The policy of Millersville University in disruptive situations, i.e., strikes by employees or students, is to remove University students from their assignments. The student will not return until the operation of the school is resumed on a normal basis. Should the period of disruption become extensive, the student may be reassigned to another location.

TRANSPORTING STUDENTS

No University student should transport any school students in any vehicle unless it is an emergency situation. This prohibition extends to field trips and overnight trips (which the student should only attend if accompanied by the cooperating teacher).

TRANSPORTATION

When transportation by University van and/or car pool is not possible, it is the student's responsibility to make his/her own transportation arrangements. Van drivers should notify the Early Field Experiences Office immediately when they are sick or if an emergency arises. Resident students with less than junior status may request to have a car on campus to complete their field experiences. Students whose requests are granted will be issued an "X" sticker for the length of this field experience only. Details are available in the Early Field Experiences Office.

TO THE FUTURE TEACHER: KEY POINTS

As you begin your educational program leading to a Pennsylvania teaching certificate, you need to keep several key points in mind:

1. Early Field Experiences are designed to help you understand teaching and yourself. Reflect upon these experiences carefully so you can be certain you have chosen the right option for your educational career. Not everyone is "cut out" to be a teacher, so talk to University faculty and cooperating teachers about your decision to teach.

2. As a representative of Millersville University, you are expected to dress and behave as a "future professional teacher". Dress codes for the various schools may differ slightly. It is suggested that MU male students wear a shirt, tie, socks, and dress slacks; no jeans, t-shirts, or hats. Female students should wear a skirt/dress pants and a blouse or a dress. Jewelry and cologne should be moderate and no nose earrings are permitted. Even such small matters as chewing gum or talking about your college social life are inappropriate. Your role as a prospective teacher begins with these EFE's.
   Remember: First impressions are lasting.

3. The School of Education requires you to complete your program through Millersville University's supervision, including the Early Field Experiences and Student Teaching components. One of the strengths of our program is that we work with you throughout all four years at Millersville University.

4. Confidentiality is critical whenever you are a guest in a school during a field experience. You should not discuss children or incidents when you are back in the dormitory, at home, in other schools, in the community, or in any other inappropriate setting.

5. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania will not issue a teaching certificate to any individual convicted of a felony. Prior to participating in your field experience, you will be required to sign a Disqualification Form which will be kept on file in the Early Field Experiences Office. If information on this form changes in any way, you must notify the Coordinator of Field Services immediately.

6. An EFE's folder is maintained on each student in the Early Field Experiences Office. This folder contains the evaluations from the various experiences the student has had. The University Supervisor assigned to the student for the student teaching experience will receive the file. After student teaching is completed, the folder is given to the student for his/her records.

7. Millersville University, in cooperation with many other agencies and institutions, provides opportunities for students to become more involved in school and educational settings. These experiences are presented in the "Early Field Experiences Hotline" which is distributed periodically during the semesters. Students are encouraged to become involved in these activities as they are invaluable experiences to include on their resumes.

FOR THE COOPERATING TEACHER

The role of the teacher working with Early Field Experiences in teacher education is challenging indeed. Because there are many levels of preparation among the students involved with EFE's, there is a concern for providing the best situation for each student. Obviously, a first year student in teacher education cannot be accommodated in the same manner as a student teacher.

Most of the University students who will visit your class will seek involvement with your class, as well as observation. Beyond this general condition, it remains difficult to generalize about pre-student teaching field experiences. However, cooperating teachers are reminded that all EFE activities must be performed under the supervision of a certified teacher.

It is the University's hope that EFE's will provide a multi-cultural exposure for our students in a variety of settings (urban, suburban, and rural).

Each cooperating teacher will receive a student data form, an overview of University expectations, and an evaluation form for the student. The evaluation is used to assess the student's progress and help him/her identify areas needing attention. It is suggested that the evaluation be shared with the student and as many comments and/or constructive criticism as possible be given. Students have commented that discussion helps them more than just reading over the evaluation. If you have specific questions about the evaluation form, please contact the Early Field Experiences Office.

In addition, the cooperating teacher should be visited by a "University Supervisor" (the professor in whose class the visiting student is enrolled), except when the University Supervisor/student ratio is prohibitive of such on-site contact. The University Supervisor has the responsibility to provide information regarding the needs of the University students assigned to the cooperating teacher.

Your role as an EFE cooperating teacher is one of primary importance to the success of Millersville University's teacher education program. *We sincerely thank those who serve in this capacity* and hope this handbook will help you in this role.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF COOPERATING TEACHERS

According to research literature, cooperating teachers are an essential component of a successful Early Field Experience program. *Some of the responsibilities of cooperating teachers during EFE's are:*

1. to prepare pupils for the arrival of the MU student. Emphasize the fact that this student will be involved with the class.

2. to help establish good rapport between the MU student and other school personnel.

3. to arrange for the MU student to receive orientation to the school building, regulations, use of machines, materials, and supplies.

4. to familiarize the MU student with the school rules, liability provisions, referrals made on learning disabled children, holidays, parent conferences (if held), and grading procedures.

5. to tell the MU student the expected time of arrival and length of day.

6. to discuss acceptable dress for this school with the MU student.

7. to provide the MU student with seating charts and explain the reason for this room or laboratory arrangement, if advisable.

8. to open a line of communication with the MU student by talking about general classroom and laboratory management, the schedule for the day, and supervision of halls and lavatories (if this is a practice in the schools). Communication throughout the experience is an essential element of a successful EFE.

9. to describe the cultural makeup of the population of the school, economic and social conditions of the neighborhood, busing schedule, and other such details.

10. to explain to the MU student the way he/she will function from the beginning of the assignment to the end, and assign appropriate tasks.

11. to discuss topics including the philosophy of the school, discipline responsibilities, staffing, special teachers, the type of school organization and reasons for this, the duties of the department chairperson, fire drills, cafeteria procedure, and other details as time allows.

12. to allow the MU student to work first with individual students, and then gradually assume expanded teaching responsibility when possible.

13. to acquaint the MU student with audio-visual equipment in the school and give necessary help to insure that the student is able to use the equipment effectively.

14. to set up definite times for conferences with the MU student.

15. to communicate when possible and whenever necessary with the University Supervisor or the Early Field Experiences Office.

The University recognizes that cooperating teachers may not have time to meet all of these responsibilities for every level of EFE's. Obviously, these experiences are progressive in nature and in expectations for students.

WRITING FINAL EVALUATIONS

The cooperating teacher evaluates the Millersville University student during EFE's by using an "Evaluation of Early Field Experience" form. The University Supervisor reads and signs the evaluation and forwards it to the Early Field Experiences Office to be placed in the student's file.

One of the most frequently asked questions is: *Should the teacher discuss the final written evaluation with the student before it is given to the University Supervisor?*

The answer is "yes".

Cooperating teachers are encouraged to share their evaluations with the Millersville University students at the time of completion. Such information is very useful to the student for self-improvement. The student should be asked to sign the form in the space provided, indicating that he/she has read the evaluation form.

It would be appreciated if the evaluation could be neatly typed or printed legibly in black ink.

What happens to the Early Field Experience Evaluations?

After the cooperating teacher completes the Early Field Experience evaluation and shares it with the student, the student returns the completed evaluation to their university professor. Students should make photocopies of all evaluations before handing them in to university professors. It is advisable for students to maintain an individual portfolio containing their own evaluations.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRINCIPAL

The responsibilities of the principal are:

1. to assume leadership in establishing a climate of acceptance of the University student by faculty members and other school staff members.

2. to assist the student in the development of appropriate professional relationships with faculty, staff, pupils, and community.

3. to interpret to the student school philosophy, public policy, rules and procedures.

4. to share in the task of supervising the student, if necessary.

5. to communicate with University staff about the quality and quantity of Early Field Experiences.

6. to ensure that all EFE activities are performed under the supervision of a certified teacher.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR

The University Supervisor assists the cooperating teacher in the supervision of the prospective teacher by:

1. establishing and maintaining open channels of communication between the school and the University.

2. informing the teacher of the University's expectations and providing necessary explanatory materials.

3. conferring with the teacher about strengths and weaknesses of the student.

4. serving as a resource person when required.

5. providing follow-up sessions with EFE students to discuss matters of mutual interest..

6. informing the teacher of due dates for reports, conferences, and evaluations expected by the University, and about data to be collected to insure accuracy and completeness.

7. informing the teacher about evaluation processes to be used. A copy of the current form will be provided.

QUESTIONS FREQUENTLY ASKED BY EARLY FIELD EXPERIENCE CO-OPS:

Is it necessary for me to observe the Millersville University student?

It is extremely important that you observe teaching/learning activities by the EFE student. Definite, specific guidelines should be developed by cooperating teachers. However, keep in mind that the EFE is classified as "pre-student teaching". It is advisable to require somewhat less in performance from students under these circumstances.

How can small group instruction be utilized?

Small group instruction is a situation in which a student works with four or five learners on a short lesson, followed by a conference with the teacher on aspects of the experience.

Organization, motivation, presentation of the lesson, and supervision of the activities might be aspects discussed in the conference. Small group instruction is one way of introducing the student to the teaching act; it provides possibilities for immediate assessment of the student's readiness to continue in teacher education.

What kinds of things are important for the student to observe?

Among matters of concern to the student should be: physical environment of the classroom or laboratory; physical, social and intellectual needs of the pupils; daily schedule; learning climate in the classrooms or laboratories; and classroom management techniques used by the teacher.

Should I allow Millersville University students to have access to student files?

If school policy permits access to student files and you think it advisable, the Millersville University student may have access, but he/she **must** honor the confidentiality of the files.

If I have a student teacher, should I also accept a freshman, sophomore or junior bloc student?

In fairness to the student teacher, the cooperating teacher should not allow other field experience students in the class unless their presence would not interfere with the student teacher's experience.

How many conferences should there be between the Millersville University student and me?

Communication lines must be kept open at all times. Students need specific and immediate critiques of their activity with children. Please plan a definite time for conferences with students, citing specific examples of items warranting praise and concern.

Is it necessary for students to develop lesson plans?

The students must plan their teaching activities. However, the extent of the planning and the development of formal lesson plans can be modified by such factors as student readiness, knowledge of the subject to be taught, and prior level of experience (e.g., freshman, sophomore, or junior) in the field.

Who should decide what methods and materials the student should use?

This should be a joint decision. The student should be allowed some flexibility, but the cooperating teacher, in consultation with the University Supervisor, still has the responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning situation for the class.

What about videotaping?

Videotaping should be encouraged whenever possible as it is an excellent way to help the student see how he/she performs in the various roles of a teacher.

What is my relationship with the University Supervisor?

It is the teacher's responsibility to communicate progress and/or problems to the University Supervisor. Keep him/her informed of what is happening in your classroom. If a problem does arise, communicate with the university supervisor immediately -- please don't let it grow into a major dilemma.

How important is the Evaluation Form I am requested to complete?

The Evaluation Form is a very valuable tool in looking at the student's field experience. Most helpful and appropriate is the opportunity to give observations and/or suggestions to the student.

STUDENT TEACHING POLICIES
(A LOOK AT THE FUTURE)

In addition to successfully completing the required professional education courses and field experiences, all students planning to student teach must sign-up with the Student Teaching Office at least one full year prior to the semester in which they plan to student teach. Failure to complete this sign-up will most likely delay the student teaching assignment. This advance sign-up is needed in order to work out school placements.

For example, if you intend to student teach in the Fall Semester of 2001, you must sign up in the Student Teaching Office during the Fall Semester of 2000. Again, this sign-up enables the University to proceed with finding you a placement in the public schools.

You will also need to register through the normal University registration process at the appropriate time.

You will receive a letter from the Student Teaching Office one semester before you student teach. The letter will give specific dates and details about your future student teaching assignment. If you have any questions, please feel free to call the Student Teaching Office at 872-3485.

Enacted February 21, 1985, by the School of Education Council:

The student teaching semester at Millersville University is the single most important experience in the preparation of a teacher. Due to the significance of this semester, and since all pre-student teaching course work is completed at Millersville University, the School of Education insists that student teaching be completed through Millersville University.

Millersville University staff supervises the student teaching experience. Because staff members also have on-campus responsibilities, i.e., teaching, advisement, committee service, research, etc., students will be placed in schools that are in close proximity to campus. Most Millersville University students are placed in Lancaster, Lebanon, and York Counties for student teaching experiences.

If highly unusual and verifiable extenuating circumstances warrant the placement of a student teacher outside the usual Millersville University service area, exceptions can be made upon receipt of a documented written request, subject to the approval of the appropriate department chairperson, the Coordinator of Field Experiences, and the Dean of the School of Education.

See the Coordinator of Field Experiences to discuss your situation!

For more information on Student Teaching, see website http://www.millersv.edu/~stutch

ALTERNATE STUDENT TEACHING

In cooperation with other Universities, Millersville University provides alternate student teaching assignments overseas, on Native American reservations, and other settings.

Applications and more information are available from the Early Field Experiences Office. If you are interested, you should speak with the Coordinator of Field Experiences at least **one year** prior to the semester in which you plan to student teach.

CERTIFICATION TESTING

It is recommended that Certification Testing or Praxis Series (formerly called National Teaching Exam or NTE's) be taken the semester before student teaching. The tests are administered three times a year: Fall, Spring, and Summer. Registration booklets, which contain more information about this test, are available in the Stayer Education Center.

For more information on Teacher Certification, see website http://www.millersv.edu/~cert

ADVANCED PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

All Education majors who register for an upper level education course must be admitted to Advanced Professional Studies (A.P.S.). There is no application form for A.P.S.; admission occurs automatically IF you meet the prerequisites. In order to be admitted to A.P.S., a student must:

1. have completed English Composition (Engl 110) with a grade of C or better
2. have completed Fundamentals of Speech (Comm 100) with a grade of C or better
3. have satisfactorily completed mathematics competency (passed Math 090 with a grade of C or better, if it was required)
4. have a minimum QPA of 2.50
5. have earned 60 credits
6. have a satisfactory Act 34 (Criminal Record Check) report, Act 151 (Child Abuse History) clearance, and a completed background information sheet on file with the Early Field Experiences Office.

Failure to fulfill any of these requirements will result in the student's being withdrawn from the class. A complete list of the upper level Education courses affected by A.P.S. is available in the Early Field Experiences Office in the Stayer Education Building.